

# Complex Operations and *Interagency* Operational Art

BY CHRISTOPHER M. SCHNAUBELT

The term *comprehensive approach* has been used by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European Union not only with great frequency but also with a high degree of ambiguity.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Government Interagency Counterinsurgency (COIN) Guide provides a graphical depiction of a “Comprehensive Approach to Counterinsurgency,” showing a mixture of economic development, political strategy, information, security, and control, but does not define the term within the text.<sup>2</sup>

Army Field Manual (FM) 3–07, *Stability Operations*, defines *comprehensive approach* as one that “integrates the cooperative efforts of the departments and agencies of the United States Government, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), multinational partners, and private sector entities to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal.”<sup>3</sup> Additionally, it states that “through a comprehensive approach to stability operations, military forces establish the conditions that enable the efforts of the other instruments of national and international power. By providing the requisite security and control to stabilize an operational area, those efforts build a foundation for transitioning to civilian control, and eventually to a host nation.”<sup>4</sup>

Although a “comprehensive” or “whole-of-government” approach is widely accepted as a requirement for successful humanitarian assistance, COIN, and stability operations, it is nonetheless extremely rare to find the requisite levels of political, military, economic, and civil resources being successfully integrated into the prescribed collaborative effort. This observation begs the question: If there is consensus that a comprehensive approach is required for complex operations, why has the concept proven so difficult to implement?

Much of the attention regarding shortfalls in American interagency coordination has focused on bureaucratic wrangling at the National Security Council level.<sup>5</sup> This is certainly part of the problem. A report by the House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services found that current national-level direction “provides unclear and inconsistent guidance on agencies’ roles and responsibilities. In addition, the lack of an agreed-upon definition for stabilization and reconstruction operations poses an obstacle to interagency collaboration.” Furthermore, the report asserts that

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“while senior leaders should get along in the interest of the mission, history is replete with examples where they have not. Rather than depending exclusively on personalities for success, the right interagency structures need to be in place and working.”<sup>6</sup>

Other analyses have pointed to the differences in the amount and deployability of resources available to implement the military and nonmilitary dimensions of such efforts. For example, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen recently stated that “I’ve got soldiers in the [National] Guard who are farmers in Texas and Missouri and Iowa, and they are going to Afghanistan to work on agriculture” because employees from the U.S. Department of Agriculture do not expect to be sent to Afghanistan.<sup>7</sup>

Calls for improving the processes of the National Security Council, shoring up the nonmilitary aspects of U.S. national power, and increasing civilian expeditionary capability should not be discounted. However, this article argues that differences in the characteristics of the various elements of national power (often summarized as diplomatic, information, military, and economic [DIME]) and in the activities necessary to bring them collectively to bear pose unique planning and coordination challenges. Even if resource, policy, and bureaucratic impediments can be resolved, it remains a puzzle how to effectively integrate the activities performed by the military, civilian agencies, private sector, and international and nongovernmental organizations into a common synergistic effort.

Recognizing this aspect of the interagency challenge is particularly important because a frequent policy prescription is to achieve “unity of command” instead of mere “unity of effort” by placing a single person in command of all military and civilian aspects of a complex operation.

Yet emerging concepts such as the Combatant Commanders Integrated Collaboration Team are unlikely to garner adequate academic, private sector, and interagency cooperation if they are perceived as subordinate to a particular military command rather than being a council of equals. The Joint Interagency Coordination Groups have generally been plagued by a lack of interagency buy-in that at best results in an information fusion center rather than a forum for effective collaborative planning.

Regardless of who or how many are “in charge,” we simply do not know how to achieve both vertical and horizontal integration of planning and execution across all the elements of DIME. In short, we need *interagency operational art*.

## Nature of Warfighting versus Civilian Challenges

Joint Publication (JP) 3–0, *Joint Operations*, states that *operational art* links the tactical employment of forces to strategic objectives. Furthermore, it entails “the application of creative imagination by commanders and staffs—supported by their skill, knowledge, and experience—to design strategies, campaigns, and major operations and organize and employ military forces.”<sup>8</sup>

Although the comparison is not exact, it could be argued that the civilian equivalent of operational art is *policy implementation*, variously defined as “the carrying out of a basic policy decision” or “what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of action.” This is a different concept than “management.” It is an element of policy *design* that includes consideration of the problems of interpretation and adjusting policy decisions to make it more likely that eventual

policy execution will produce the desired outcomes. Although the term *design* is now emerging in U.S. military doctrine, as discussed below, public policy analysts have been using it since at least the 1980s.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps because of smaller size and often much greater autonomy at the delivery end of policy, civilian agencies (and private businesses) rarely have organizational structures and planning functions equivalent to the military concept of an operational-level headquarters. Nor is it clear that they would benefit from adding such a layer in most circumstances. The purpose of civilian midlevel management is usually to reduce the span of control rather than develop plans to link strategy to “tactical” activity by multiple offices or business units.<sup>10</sup>

At least in the case of ground forces, which are generally expected to have the lead during complex operations, modern U.S. military planning still betrays its physical heritage of moving large armies on land during the era of Carl von Clausewitz and Antoine-Henri Jomini, when an army’s line of march was a critical consideration. Beginning at least with the concept of AirLand Battle adopted by the U.S. Army in the late 1970s and early 1980s, doctrine began to recognize that the contemporary battlefield was “nonlinear” and included a much deeper physical dimension and a time dimension.<sup>11</sup> However, the “line of operation” continues to be a basic organizing principle.

The U.S. Army has tried to relax this conceptual straitjacket and now speaks of “lines of effort” (previously called “logical lines of operation”) in addition to “physical lines of operation.”<sup>12</sup> But, of course, by definition “lines” are “linear.” Trying to fit nonwarfighting activities into such a framework has not thus far proved productive. One reason might be that the objectives and tasks for the political, diplomatic, and economic lines of effort in a campaign plan

have significant qualitative differences from those of the security line. Calling these activities a “line of effort” instead of a “logical line of operation” does not resolve this disjuncture. The mathematical concept of a set is probably a better organizing principle for most of the nonmilitary activities in complex operations, many of which do not require performance in a specific sequence.

In a critique of U.S. Army FM 3–24/U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, Major General Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., asserts that the manual relies too heavily on “the same solution that Soldiers typically fall back on when confounded by a difficult operational situation (COIN or otherwise): employ ever larger numbers of Soldiers and have them engage in ‘close’ contact with the ‘target,’ however defined.” With a logic that should apply to stability operations as well as COIN, General Dunlap argues, “Of course,

**military and nonmilitary activities tend to differ in their calculability**

Airmen bring distinct weaponry to the fight but equally—or more—important is the Airmen’s unique way of thinking.”<sup>13</sup> There is no doubt that bringing a less Earthbound perspective to planning for the military aspects of a comprehensive approach would be useful. Yet if Dunlap is correct about the differences between the way Soldiers and Airmen think about strategy and tactics, the divergence between typical military and civilian approaches—and the nature of their activities—is even greater.

For example, military and nonmilitary activities tend to differ in their calculability. While many components of economic development—such as miles of road built and

kilowatt hours of electricity generated—can be straightforwardly counted or measured, many critical nonsecurity outputs, such as political accommodation, progress toward reconciliation, legitimacy of governing institutions, and cooperation from neighboring

even senior Foreign Service Officers typically spend more time as “operators” than managers or developers of strategy and plans

states, are more likely to be intangible. This is not to say that empirical indicators cannot be identified, but these are highly subjective constructs that are more difficult to measure than, for example, the size of the area under military control or friendly, enemy, and non-combatant casualty rates.

Perhaps the biggest difference may be the inputs. Activities to implement a security line of operation frequently involve well-defined tasks such as providing military and police training to host-nation security forces, clearing neighborhoods, and operating checkpoints. Military inputs tend to be tangible: T-walls can be touched; the number of patrols conducted or joint security stations in operation can be counted. The inputs involved in many, if not most, political tasks are to attend meetings and perform other activities in attempts to persuade political leaders to behave in a certain way.

Another aspect to the difference between security and the other requirements for stability is that the organization and processes for military operations have been well documented. This is not to imply that warfighting is simpler or easier than performing nonmilitary tasks (it is certainly deadlier), but it is an empirical fact

regarding what the military has done to train and prepare for combat operations.<sup>14</sup>

For “traditional” high-intensity battles, we have a pretty good understanding of the physics and physiology of combat.<sup>15</sup> The Army, for example, has planning factors that suggest that a 3-to-1 ratio of attackers to defenders is necessary for an assault to have a reasonable probability of success. After defeating a defending company at 3 to 1, a battalion will be out of the fight for 24 hours. The odds of success are increased and the recovery time reduced if the attackers have a higher ratio against the defenders.<sup>16</sup>

Conversely, our understanding of how to produce political change (at least in the absence of military or economic threats, if not an outright military overthrow) and how to create economic growth is vague. The timelines for realizing concrete results from political and economic policies tend to be wildly inaccurate and reflect wishful thinking rather than historical analysis.

Military planners can use shorthand on PowerPoint slides for a task such as “Seize Objective Widget,” and there is a largely common understanding of the requirements. Behind that simple description, there will be detailed operations orders down through several levels of command and troop leading procedures and standard operating procedures at the lowest echelons. Military leaders at all levels involved will have completed significant formal training to inculcate the processes to develop plans and monitor their execution.

The U.S. Army has a standard, modular hierarchical organization from division headquarters down to squads. There are Joint and Mission Essential Task Lists, which break down further into Battle Tasks that describe the key subtasks for accomplishing a mission and their

U.S. Department of Agriculture and  
Konar Provincial Reconstruction  
Team members gather soil for tests



U.S. Army (Russell Gilchrest)

interrelationship between the next higher/lower echelons. There are task lists and crosswalks for leader tasks, collective tasks, and Soldier tasks; and there are training and evaluation outlines for use in training units and troops to accomplish these actions and in assessing their ability to do so. (Of course, the other Services have modular organizations and similar training and evaluation regimes.)

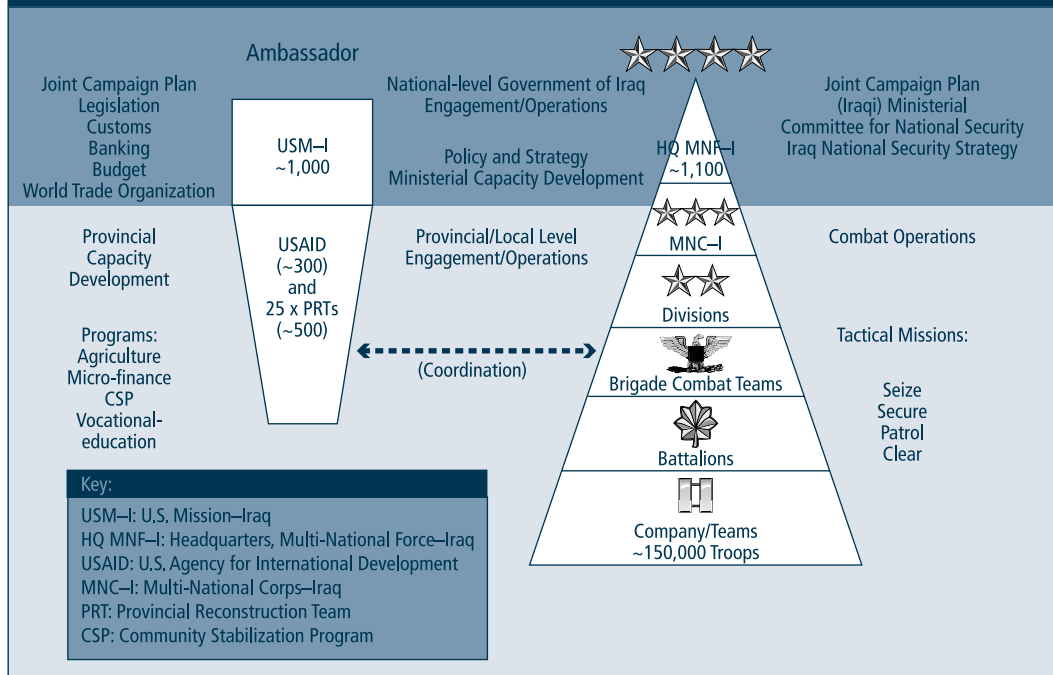
A typical military operation will delineate unambiguous geographic boundaries (area of responsibility) that assign specific units to be responsible for every inch of ground and cubic foot of airspace. There is an obvious chain of responsibilities and expected actions between each individual Soldier or Marine on the ground and the commanding general.

Nothing comparable exists for economic development and governance tasks, which tend to be aligned by function rather than local geography or a rigid hierarchy of authority. This does not imply that civilian processes are slipshod or lackadaisical. Rather, they are of a different nature.

Figure 1 illustrates the differences between coalition civilian and military structures and their organization to manage or command and control their relative functions in Iraq as of 2008. At the top, the shaded area depicts the U.S. Embassy and Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF–I) Headquarters and their roles in relation to the national government of Iraq. Both organizations collaborated in writing, updating, and monitoring the execution of a joint campaign plan for Iraq and engaged the prime minister and other ministerial-level Iraqi officials.

It might be argued that at this level can be found the greatest similarities between military and civilian activities. Neither the U.S. Ambassador nor the MNF–I commanding general could *force* the sovereign government of Iraq to do anything. The primary inputs were to advise, monitor, and

**Figure 1. U.S. Mission–Iraq/Multi-National Force–Iraq Vertical Integration Structures and Key Tasks**



persuade Iraqi officials to make decisions conducive to promoting security and stability, to include implementing policies that would promote democracy, good governance, rule of law, economic growth, and good relations with neighbors and other states.

However, the MNF–I military headquarters also executed considerable efforts from the top down to conduct command and control of all coalition military activities. In comparison, the Embassy is not organized with the equivalent of subordinate “maneuver units.”<sup>17</sup> The Embassy’s political, political-military, and economic sections operate with a high degree of autonomy in day-to-day activities. Even senior Foreign Service Officers typically spend more time as “operators” than managers or developers of strategy and plans. A higher “rank” or grade in the Foreign Service correlates more closely with the expected level of host-nation interlocutors than with the number of subordinates directed.

Below the horizontal line in figure 1, the disparities become even sharper. The military activities are aligned with a straightforward, hierarchical pyramid with many more personnel and other resources at the bottom than at the top. Although midlevel and junior leaders can and often do perform activities typically described as “civilian” tasks, such as promoting good governance and economic development at the local level, their primary responsibilities are security related—the “clear” and “hold” tasks in a counterinsurgency framework.<sup>18</sup> The vertical integration via a chain of command is unambiguous. While horizontal coordination occurs, laterally between units at the same echelon and in some cases between units and local Iraqi officials, most attention is



downward-directed management (that is, command and control).

Civilian political and economic tasks are conceived and executed differently than military security tasks. Especially in traditional Embassy activities, there is much less management directed downward. The civilian side is nearly an inverted pyramid with more staffing and resources at the top than at the bottom.

This configuration is not top-heavy in the sense of a high ratio of “management” to “workers,” but is a reflection of the fact that the bulk of the political and diplomatic work is being conducted parallel to the Iraqi national level of government. Most Foreign Service Officers spend the majority of their time engaging their host-nation equivalents, not directing actions along a chain of subordinates. Also, there is no matching effort at the neighborhood, district, and municipal level—which would require several thousand more civilian personnel.

Most economic development programs are decentralized and diffuse. Programs are not “tied in” with other programs on their left and right boundaries as is the case with military units. There is no battlefield maneuver conducted between or among the programs and thus no requirement for civilian management to be the equivalent of military command and control.

Another difference (asymmetry?) is that war is almost always a zero-sum game. For something to be a benefit to one side, it generally must hurt the other. Time is a great example of this. Historically, it usually benefits the defender except during a siege.<sup>19</sup>

Successful democratic governance and economic development, however, are usually not zero-sum. For a voluntary economic transaction to occur, both sides must perceive that they will benefit. Otherwise, the voluntary exchange would not take place. (This is not to say that

both sides must benefit equally or that the transaction is necessarily noncompetitive.)

Often, time will benefit both sides in a business or diplomatic negotiation by allowing them to explore and agree upon a mutually satisfactory resolution. However, in cases such as the coalition efforts in Iraq, timeline-driven legislative and political goals can be counterproductive by reducing the opportunities to resolve real differences. In such a fragile environment, it may be better not to pass a controversial law than to pass it with a legally required parliamentary majority that lacks consensus and thus results in driving the parties further apart. Intervening policymakers must be careful that by applying additional pressure on host-nation political parties to reach a deal, they do not inadvertently push them toward violence instead of agreement.

## Clocks and Clutch Plates

There are at least two components to the problem of improving host-nation governance. One is *technical capacity*, which is somewhat amenable to being developed more quickly through “surging” to provide expertise. This has to do with teaching/helping host-nation officials to perform the bureaucratic functions of government (and, to a lesser extent, business). Perhaps any artillery captain can become emperor of France, but running a national government is a difficult task for most people who do not possess large organization management experience. In failed or failing states, there are few such individuals, much less those who also possess legitimacy with the population. This challenge is compounded by the fact that at least initially, these leaders will typically be without a capable, professional bureaucracy that can effectively implement even the wisest policy decisions.

Within a wide range, there is a direct correlation between surging civilian resources to

provide advice and the pace of improvement in technical capabilities. Even so, technical training can be ineffective unless the society has accepted and inculcated the values on which the principles are based. For example, anticorruption technical assistance and investigator training does little good if corruption is widely accepted in society and government officials are routinely able to act with impunity. A great deal of technical assistance also requires civil society programs that reinforce the message among the general populace.

A related and more difficult problem is *willingness* to make the compromises necessary to achieve political consensus. To some extent, willingness can be generated with targeted and appropriate training for government officials and awareness programs in civil society if such efforts result in socialization of the necessary underlying values. These are the types of programs needed to provide a foundation for building the necessary governmental or economic capacity in areas such as rule of law, electricity, oil, services, medical care, and so forth. But these cultural/societal shifts are likely to take decades or generations to fully achieve.<sup>20</sup>

Lack of willingness is a problem that does not lend itself to a more rapid resolution as a result of a “surge” of resources, whether military or civilian. Some of the elements of reconciliation, if they are to truly occur instead of being merely a “check in the box” on the political timeline of the intervening powers, are likely to require decades if not generations.

Despite doctrinal recognition that military operations entail art as well as science, with increasingly more art and less science applicable at the higher levels of war, the modern U.S. Army still tends to take a mechanistic approach to planning its operations—the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP). Although the process may be modified, especially when

time is running short on the battlefield, its procedures are far more routinized and driven from the top down than anything found in the civilian world. The MDMP is primarily deductive and designed for a specific set of problems (military missions) under a specific set of circumstances (primarily combat).

This approach is rarely optimal for civilian decisionmaking. The most important factor may be that the MDMP begins with a “problem” that has largely been defined by the higher headquarters in the form of orders or plans that assign a specific mission to the organization conducting the MDMP. In most cases, civilian organizations must start from scratch in framing the problem to be solved rather than deduce it from higher guidance that, when it exists at all, is likely to be ambiguous and aspirational rather than precise and directive.<sup>21</sup>

These differences in planning, combined with different cultures and types of activities involved in the execution of plans, increase the difficulty of integrating military and civilian activities in a conflict environment. This observation is not to claim that either a civilian or a military approach to decisionmaking is the better. Rather, they serve different purposes that historically have operated in separate, unrelated spheres in which the coordination of military and civilian activities was not a consideration.

Most military tasks can be synchronized in time and space (this is the crux of “maneuver”) and, given a known correlation of forces, have somewhat predictable outcomes that can be modeled using computer simulations. Yet this is often not true for key aspects of political and economic development. While interdependent, the linkages between activities in these realms are not rigid.

Building a road or installing a sewer line, at least in a peaceful area, is largely predictable and can be scheduled. However, creating jobs,



reconciling grievances, or negotiating political compromises in an area still torn by conflict is much more problematic. Even “simple” construction tasks such as building a hospital or repairing power lines become unpredictable when workers are threatened by violence or infrastructure is frequently attacked. Building schools does little good if teachers or students are routinely killed or afraid to come to class. In such cases, the military can enable civilian efforts by providing sufficiently enduring security, but this tends to be sequential rather than integrated.

Tactical-level ground force leaders, especially at echelons below division, can create relatively accurate timetables for the “clear” portion of the “clear-hold-build” approach to counterinsurgency. Adjusted through experience and the level of armed resistance met, a unit can develop a fairly reliable estimate of how long it will take to clear a geographic region of a given size with a given force of known capability. When projected timelines go awry at the company, battalion, regiment, or brigade level, they are likely to be off by a matter of hours or days rather than the months or even years that are the common range of error for political or economic estimates.

Nonetheless, the “hold” task becomes problematic. This is not because maintaining security or defending a cleared area is uniquely difficult, but because of the question of how long it must be held. This presents a particular challenge in situations such as Iraq—at least prior to the troop surge in 2007—and contemporary Afghanistan where there are insufficient capable and reliable forces to clear *and* hold large parts of the battlespace simultaneously. The need to clear other areas puts pressure on the military force to move on from holding an area once it has been cleared. Yet when an area is insufficiently “built” to keep insurgents out,

there is a high probability that it will revert to enemy control and have to be cleared again.

A lesson that many military leaders have drawn from the problem of holding gains long enough is that clear-hold-build activities must occur simultaneously rather than sequentially.<sup>22</sup> However, it might be instead argued that the real lesson is that security (“clear” + “hold”) requires a more enduring effort and that the political and economic development aspects of “build” cannot quickly replace the need for security.

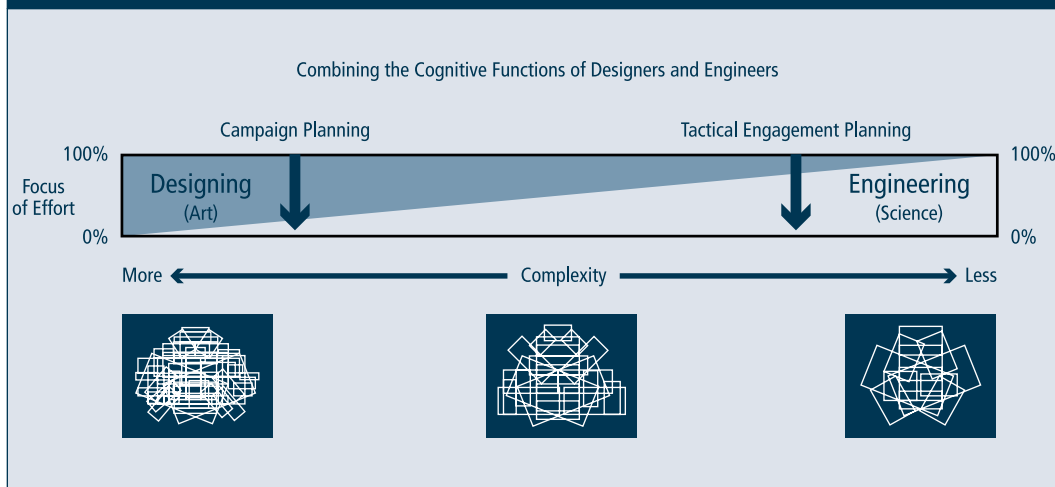
Yet another layer of complexity is added when the important role of NGOs in a comprehensive approach is considered. Many NGOs operate highly independent programs with almost no hierarchical structure for managing their in-country activities. Some NGOs refuse to collaborate with military units as a matter of principle. In an *International Herald Tribune* op-ed, for example, Anna Husarska of the International Rescue Committee wrote that

another layer of complexity is added when the important role of nongovernmental organizations in a comprehensive approach is considered

“mixing aid and security is a mistake the international stakeholders in Afghanistan are making . . . security and development are two distinct objectives that require different approaches.”<sup>23</sup>

Ironically, on the same day, the *Times of London* carried a front-page article on development aid to Somalia being inadvertently used to fund militias and warlords. It was followed by an article on the British Department for International Development having “taken over diplomacy in Africa” while “[naively] dealing with Africa’s notoriously venal leaders, dragging Britain into

Figure 2. Military Planning



unhealthy close relations with countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda, which have poor governance records.” It concludes by noting that “it is precisely the money lavished on some of the most incompetent governments in the world which prevents them from taking measures for higher economic growth.”<sup>24</sup>

The preceding does not suggest that political and economic development is not of equal or greater importance to military (and police) security in establishing a stable democracy. However, these different aspects of counterinsurgency and stability operations move according to a logic of their own and at a pace that seems only indirectly related to policy changes and financial initiatives. A mechanistic approach to synchronizing them is probably not possible. At best, they are more akin to the clutch and pressure plate in the transmission of a car than the precisely fit gears in a watch. Making allowance for friction is as important as making use of it.

### Getting the Pieces to Work Together

The collaborative “design” approach now being explored by the U.S. military seems to offer the most promising methodology to bridge the gap between traditional “military” and “civilian” activities in counterinsurgency and stability operations. It may help to fill some of the void and provide an intellectual framework that could be useful to both military and civilian planners in beginning to meet the challenge of aligning their disparate activities.

The February 13, 2008, version of JP 3–0 briefly addresses design elements in relation to operational art. However, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525–5–500, *Commander’s Appreciation and Campaign Design*, develops the concept in much greater detail and specifically recognizes the limitations of the military’s “traditional planning processes” in its assumption “that plans and orders from higher headquarters have framed the problem for their subordinates” and, as shown in figure 2, depicts a range of “engineering” to “designing”

according to the complexity of the problem to be addressed.<sup>25</sup>

The campaign design approach recognizes a class of complex, ill-structured—or “wicked”—problems that lack not only a single solution set, but also a commonly defined frame for the problem. Furthermore, the problem evolves because the inputs intended to provide a solution cause shifts within the system. Traditional sequential step problemsolving approaches do not work for wicked problems. Instead, an iterative effort that initially focuses on framing the problem is necessary.

Key elements to implementing a campaign design approach include:

- ❖ Establishing the strategic context. What is the history of the problem, and why does it now require military power to address it?
- ❖ Synthesizing strategic guidance. What ends do national-level leaders desire, what have they directed military commanders to accomplish, and why did they establish those particular goals?
- ❖ Describing the systemic nature of the problem to be solved and creating a narrative to explain what problems must be addressed to achieve strategic goals. What factors, constituents, and relationships are relevant?
- ❖ Establishing assumptions about the problem. In social science terms, this is similar to establishing a working hypothesis: What gaps need to be filled between what we think we know and what we think we need to know in order to design an approach to the problem?

The campaign design process also recognizes the importance of continually revisiting

and revising the framing of the problem, especially the assumptions, as the design is implemented. More information about the problem will become known as the process is carried out. Additionally, system inputs resulting from the design are likely to cause the problem to evolve and require an adjustment to the previous frame. This concept is a quantum leap from planning a linear campaign that moves sequentially across a geographic series of battlefields.

Perhaps the most significant change from traditional MDMP-style planning is the axiom that “designing is creative and best accomplished through discourse. *Discourse* is the candid exchange of ideas without fear of retribution that results in a synthesis . . . and a shared understanding of the operational problem.”<sup>26</sup> This suggests more of a two-way, dialectic approach between a commander and his staff compared to the MDMP, which is largely driven from the top down.

Such practice is similar to how many corporations develop business strategy. According to University of Pittsburgh Professor of Strategic Management John C. Camillus:

*Companies can manage strategy's wickedness not by being more systematic but by using social-planning processes. They should organize brainstorming sessions to identify the various aspects of a wicked problem; hold retreats to encourage executives and stakeholders to share their perspectives; run focus groups to better understand stakeholders' viewpoints; involve stakeholders in developing future scenarios; and organize design charrettes to develop and gain acceptance for possible strategies. The aim should be to create a shared understanding of the problem and foster a joint commitment to possible ways of resolving it.*<sup>27</sup>

While the campaign design approach is a step in the right direction, many challenges to implementation remain. Although it will probably be incorporated in the next version of FM 5–0 on the operations process, the Army has yet to fully institutionalize the concept of “design” versus planning. Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege has recently written that “the kind of thinking we have called ‘operational art’ is often now required at the battalion level,”<sup>28</sup> but for most U.S. Army officers—at least at the company and field-grade ranks—the TRADOC pamphlet is an esoteric, academic document, and their thinking is still largely driven by the traditional top-down, linear MDMP approach.

Additionally, even though the campaign design concept highlights the importance of discourse, it is still commander-centric. Successfully applying it will require modification to make it work among multiple agencies and organizations. Civilian leaders will typically expect to be treated as equals rather than subordinates of the military commander. In this author’s experience, most senior military commanders work cooperatively and collegially with their civilian counterparts. The difficulties usually appear at the next layer down within their staffs, which may sometimes be inclined to cut off the civilian side of discourse by saying that “this is what the commander wants.” Commanders must not only be cognizant of their own interactions with their partners from other organizations, but they also need to ensure their staffs work in a truly collaborative fashion with their civilian counterparts.

Another of the institutional differences that make it difficult to implement collaborative designing or planning is the fact that American civilian agencies generally lack comprehensive continuing professional

education programs for mid-career and senior managers that are comparable to professional military education programs. Although the State Department sends some Foreign Service Officers to the National War College or one of the other Defense Department senior Service colleges, most have no formal education regarding the development of strategy or planning. This inequality in education is combined with a disparity in typical levels of management and/or leadership experience: The average company commander on the streets of Baghdad is in charge of more people than the average U.S. Ambassador.

Rather than simply being directed—which many “unity of command” proponents assume will solve the interagency problem—

**civilian leaders will typically expect to be treated as equals rather than subordinates of the military commander**

most civilian leaders and planners will need to be both convinced and guided through the process of writing a joint-interagency campaign plan or through other means of designing and implementing a comprehensive approach. This in turn will place a premium on interpersonal skills and require a degree of persuasion that many commanders and staff officers are unused to applying in a traditional military context. **PRISM**

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Brooke Smith-Windsor, NATO Defense College Research Paper #38, “Hasten Slowly: NATO’s Effects Based and Comprehensive Approach to Operations,” July 2008, available at <[www.ndc.nato.int/research/respaper.html](http://www.ndc.nato.int/research/respaper.html)>.

<sup>2</sup> United States Government Counterinsurgency Initiative, January 2009, 17, available at <[www.state.gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf)>.

<sup>3</sup> In November 2008, the Joint Doctrine Development Community agreed to initiate the development of a joint publication (JP) on stability operations with U.S. Joint Forces Command designated as lead agent. See “Joint Doctrine Update,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 54 (2<sup>d</sup> Quarter 2009), 128.

<sup>4</sup> JP 3–27, *Homeland Defense*, states: “Given the persistent nature of current threats, a proactive, comprehensive approach to HD is required,” in Glossary-4 and vii; however, it does not provide a definition (I–3).

<sup>5</sup> The Congressional Research Service (CRS) has compiled a summary of many of the arguments in the American context. See Catherine Dale et al., *Organizing the U.S. Government for National Security: Overview of the Interagency Reform Debates* (Washington, DC: CRS, April 18, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, “Agency Stovepipes vs. Strategic Agility: Lessons We Need to Learn from Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan,” April 2008, 32, 49, available at <[www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/Reports/PRT\\_Report.pdf](http://www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/Reports/PRT_Report.pdf)>.

<sup>7</sup> Walter Pincus, “Foreign Policy Beyond the Pentagon,” *The Washington Post*, February 9, 2009, A–15.

<sup>8</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3–0, *Joint Operations*, Change 1, February 13, 2008, xiii, xix.

<sup>9</sup> Peter deLeon and Linda deLeon, “What Ever Happened to Policy Implementation?” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 12, no. 4 (2002), 473–474.

<sup>10</sup> The author thanks Allen Burch and Joseph Banavice for their insights on this topic as Master of Business Administration graduates and instructors. Also see Steven Kelman et al., “Dialogue on the Definition and Evolution of the Field of Public Management,” *International Public Management Review* 4, no. 2 (2003), 1–19.

<sup>11</sup> The kernel of this concept was to attack Soviet–Warsaw Pact formations in depth, that is, hit their second- and third-echelon unit formations, as a means to offset their superior numerical strength in lieu of conceding defensive space on West Germany territory. This concept replaced the “active-defense,” which proposed “trading space for time” and fighting a delaying effort until reinforcements could arrive from North America. Naturally, the owners of the space to be traded—the West Germans—were not enthusiastic about the earlier concept. Compare John Romjue, “The Evolution of the Airland Battle Concept,” *Air University Review* (May–June 1984), available at <[www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1984/may-jun/romjue.html](http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1984/may-jun/romjue.html)>.

<sup>12</sup> Jack Kem, “Thoughts on Logical Lines of Operations,” November 17, 2008, available at <<http://usacac.army.mil/BLOG/blogs/reflectionsfromfront/archive/2008/11/17/thoughts-on-logical-lines-of-operation.aspx>>.

<sup>13</sup> Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., “Developing Joint Counterinsurgency Doctrine: An Airman’s Perspective,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 49 (2<sup>d</sup> Quarter 2008), 87.

<sup>14</sup> James Q. Wilson argues that in peacetime, the U.S. Army is a “procedural agency”; it can observe the activities of its operators but not the outcomes of their efforts because war is the only test that counts. Yet in wartime, it is a “craft agency” because the outcomes can be observed but not the activities of its operators. Accordingly, this uncertainty drives the Army to emphasize the detailed definition and documentation of tasks during peacetime. See *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 163–168.

<sup>15</sup> This is not to claim that achieving mechanical precision in security operations is possible. As H.R. McMaster has recently written, the intangible human element plus the “fog of war” play key roles in determining the outcome of any armed conflict. See “The Human Element: When Gadgetry Becomes Strategy,” *World*

*Affairs* (Winter 2009), available at <[www.worldaffairsjournal.org/2009%20-%20Winter/full-McMaster.html](http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/2009%20-%20Winter/full-McMaster.html)>. Nonetheless, the side that possesses overwhelming force, sound leadership, and mostly accurate information will usually win a particular battle.

<sup>16</sup> Field Manual (FM) 5.0, *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, January 2005), 3–32.

<sup>17</sup> Susan B. Epstein, *U.S. Embassy in Iraq* (Washington, DC: CRS, October 24, 2006), figure 1.

<sup>18</sup> The “clear-hold-build” approach to counterinsurgency is described in chapter 5 of FM 3–24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency*. In brief, “the pattern of this approach is to clear, hold, and build one village, area, or city—and then reinforce success by expanding to other areas. This approach aims to develop a long-term, effective HN [host-nation] government framework and presence that secures the people and facilitates meeting their basic needs. Success reinforces the HN government’s legitimacy.” The primary tasks during clear-hold-build are to provide continuous security for the local populace, eliminate insurgent presence, reinforce political primacy, enforce the rule of law, and rebuild local HN institutions.

<sup>19</sup> Compare Victor Davis Hanson, *A War Like No Other* (New York: Random House, 2006), 207. One of the debates on the existence of military revolutions concerns whether or how technology has shifted the advantage back and forth between the offense and defense over time.

<sup>20</sup> However, recent research by Stathis N. Kalyvas on civil war violence implies that effective control by the government (or insurgents) can shift the prewar preferences of the population toward the position favored by the group exerting control in a relatively short time. This implies that causing a change in societal values may be easier than expected, but emphasizes the ability to broadly apply force rather than the effects of political compromise, implementing good governance, or achieving economic growth. See *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 92–104, 112–132.

<sup>21</sup> There are also significant differences in planning and execution between the private sector and government civilian agencies. This is true particularly with regard to establishing goals since making a profit is rarely a governmental consideration. Wilson provides a detailed analysis in *Bureaucracy*. For the purposes of the argument in this article, however, reference to a common “civilian” approach is adequate.

<sup>22</sup> John Burns, “U.S. General Says Jobs and Services May Curb Iraq Violence,” *The New York Times*, December 13, 2006, A–1.

<sup>23</sup> Anna Husarska, “Sending the wrong message,” *International Herald Tribune*, June 3, 2008, 8.

<sup>24</sup> Rob Crilly, “British taxpayer funds Somali police force for regime accused of war crimes,” *Times of London*, June 2, 2008, available at <[www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article4046164.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article4046164.ece)>.

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525–5–500, *Commander’s Appreciation and Campaign Design* (Fort Monroe, VA: TRADOC, January 28, 2008), figure 1–3.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 15. Italics in original.

<sup>27</sup> “Strategy as a Wicked Problem,” *Harvard Business Review*, May 2008.

<sup>28</sup> Huba Wass de Czege, “Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions,” *Military Review* (January–February 2009), 2.